

## HANDOUT 28

### BUILDING A PROTOCOL FOR JOB CANDIDATE INTERVIEW

<b>Purpose</b>	Principals can use this tool to reflect on current practice for interviewing new staff and consider ways to improve interview protocols in turnaround schools to ensure that staff with the right type of skills is recruited. This tool can be used to track useful interview questions and add new questions about teachers' knowledge and relevant experience, motivation, degree of match to the school needs, and interpersonal relationship skills.
<b>Materials</b>	None
<b>Media</b>	None
<b>Topic</b>	Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools
<b>Practice</b>	Committed Staff

## Building a Protocol for Job Candidate Interview

### How to use this planner

This planner aims to serve as an “item bank” from which principals can draw questions for interviews with new job applicants for various types of positions at the turnaround school. The planner includes two columns:

The “Interview Question” column

- Add to or modify existing questions in this column. Ideas for questions can come from conversations with other principals, the district office, and from brainstorming with the interviewing committee following job candidate interviews.

The “Usefulness Rating” column

- Note questions which were particularly useful and valid in identifying the staff that is the right fit for your school. Note questions which were not useful in previous interviews. Rate the item as “Very Useful,” “Useful,” “Need Tweaking,” or “Not Useful.” This column may be used for debriefing meetings with interview committees to improve interview items over time.

Principals are encouraged to use this planner as a tool to prepare for interviews. For example, add rows to explore alternative wording of interview questions.

### Preparing the interview protocol

This planner can be edited to develop an interview protocol. To do so, select the best questions for your situation, cut the rest out of the table, put in an order that appears to flow for the situation, and add a column for taking notes. Principals can re-order the interview items to best align with the job description and the purposes of the job interview. Each question may have a different weight in the final determination of the candidate’s skills; this can be reflected in pre-determining how many points would be awarded to a fair, good, or outstanding response to each of the questions. Principals can also add an open-ended section that includes general impressions such as personality (warmth, openness), flexibility, adaptability, and communication skills.

Interview Question	Usefulness Rating
<b>General Motivation</b>	
1. Why did you become a teacher?	
2. What do you enjoy most about teaching?	

3. How would you describe your ideal job?	
4. What goals do you have in your career?	
5. What do you think it takes to be successful in this career?	
6. Why do you want to work here rather than at a school with fewer challenges?	
7. What gives you the greatest concern about working for a low-performing school?	
8. When you plan your lessons, would you prefer to work in a team or alone? Why? Please describe the differences between working individually and working as a team in a school setting.	
9. What types of professional supports do you most appreciate?	
<b>Strengths and Skills</b>	
10. Tell us about your qualifications (education, endorsements). How will these qualifications (e.g., coursework, training, experience working in similar schools) enable you to contribute to our [content area] program?	
11. What experiences do you think you have had that best prepared you to work in this type of environment successfully?	
12. Provide an example of innovative techniques you have used to illustrate academic concepts to a) struggling students, b) students with special needs, and c) students with low academic self-concept.	
13. What personal strengths do you find especially helpful in your teaching?	
14. Provide examples of instances in the past in which you have revised your instruction based on evaluation of student data or feedback from colleagues.	
15. What could a visitor to your class expect to notice with respect to instruction, student engagement, and student behavior?	
16. Assume you have a student who is chronically late and disruptive in class. What would you do?	

17. Assume a student tells you that he/she is bullied outside the classroom by one of your students. What would you do?	
18. Under what circumstances would you refer a child to the administrator's office?	
19. Assume you have several students who never raise their hands in class and seem unprepared when you address them with a question. What would you do?	
20. How do you engage students and make them more motivated to learn [content area]?	
21. How would you deal with a student who regularly misses homework or fails to submit class work?	
22. Describe a situation in which you were successful in teaching [content area].	
23. How do you evaluate your own teaching performance?	
24. How do you check for students' understanding?	
25. Describe the past training or coaching you have received to help you to analyze different types of student data.	
26. How would you know if a student didn't understand a lesson? If you find out that student did not understand a lesson, what would you do?	
27. What would you do if half your students did poorly on a test?	
28. How do you modify your teaching to reach students who are struggling to perform at grade level?	
29. What is your greatest strength as a [content area] teacher?	
30. Please describe the components of one of your best lessons. Why was it successful?	
31. Describe the physical appearance of the classroom you have recently taught in (for example, use of walls, library, technology, seating arrangement).	
32. "It seems like there is never enough time to cover the curriculum or to help the students master knowledge and skills." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?	

33. Describe how you have collaborated in the past with other teachers, including English language learner teachers, special education teachers, and other content area teachers, to improve instruction for your students?	
<b>Matching School Needs</b>	
34. Students in this school come from diverse backgrounds and have diverse needs, including different levels of ability. Describe how you plan to work with our students and their parents to help the students succeed.	
35. Describe your understanding of block scheduling and your strategies for teaching on classes that are longer than typical class periods.	
36. What is your understanding of curriculum integration? Can you provide an example of how you have done this?	
37. When do you think a teacher should contact a parent? Under what conditions? How often? How (phone, note, email)?	
38. In addition to your classroom duties, how else can you serve our students?	
39. Have you been part of school turnaround or school reform efforts? If so, describe your experiences.	
40. In what way should state-adopted standards affect [content area] program at our school? Can you provide an example of how you have used state standards in instruction?	
41. What do you do to help students feel connected to staff?	
42. We are pursuing the idea of [name of instructional or organizational strategy]. If you are familiar with this strategy, please describe your experiences with it and your ideas of how you might use it in this school.	
43. What does a caring relationship with a student mean to you? Can you provide an example?	
44. Describe how you encouraged struggling students in the past (for example, challenge students to perform beyond what they believe they can do).	
45. Describe how you have helped students recognize where they are strong, and build on their strengths.	

<b>Knowledge of the Subject</b>	
46. What coursework have you taken that has made you especially suited for this position?	
47. Are there any materials you have used that you find are especially effective for struggling students or bright students?	
48. How do you stay current in your field?	
49. In which curriculum area do you feel particularly strong?	
50. What do you hope to learn from your mentor?	
<b>Personal Relationships</b>	
51. What kind of people do you find it easiest and most difficult to work with and why?	
52. How would your students describe you as a teacher?	
53. What would you do if your Principal made a decision you didn't like?	